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ABSTRACT

The "skin, scale, feather, and fur" program was designed to provide children in the New York City public schools with knowledge about various animal species and their place in the animal world. Teacher and paraprofessional staff along with the Staten Island Zoo Personnel developed activities and instructed children at the zoo. They also conducted exploratory learning activities at schools. The primary objective of the program was to determine whether, as a result of participation in the program 70% of the pupils would get 60% of the questions correct on a test measuring knowledge about various animal species. Five hundred pupils in grades three through nine participated in the program. Data was collected for students in grades two through four. A program developed instrument measuring knowledge about various animal species was administered after the children had been exposed to the program. The findings of the report indicated that 98% of the pupils in grades two, three, and four (512 out of 519) received test scores above 60%. (JP)

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EVALUATION REPORT

B/E 20-63444

SKIN, SCALE, FEATHER, AND FUR

An Evaluation of Selected New York City Umbrella Programs funded under a Special Grant of the New York State Legislature performed for the Board of Education of the City of New York for the 1975-1976 school year

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U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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CHAPTER I: THE PROGRAM

A teacher and paraprofessional with Staten Island Zoo personnel developed various activities and instructed children who visited the zoo. The program was two fold, an on site (at zoo) which consisted of exploratory learning activities during a morning session and off site (at schools) in the afternoon. Both sessions involved the use of live animals utilizing a Zoomobile to transport animals to schools for the P.M. session. Program offerings dealt with the history of animals. Comparison of classes of animals, animal adaptions to different environments, interdependencies and interrelationships. The focus was on co-existence of man and animals. The program began February, 1976 and terminated June, 1976. A program modification which added another teacher and para was implemented May, 1976.

CHAPTER II: EVALUATION

Evaluation Objective 1:

To determine whether, as a result of participation in the program 70% of the children will get 60% of the questions correct on an instrument measuring knowledges about various species.

Subjects

Approximately 500 pupils in grades 3 through 9 participating in the program. Pre determined scheduling during the data collection phase permitted data to be collected at the second, third, and fourth grade levels.

Methods and Procedures

A program developed instrument measuring knowledges about various species was administered after the children have been exposed to the program.

Analysis of Data

A count of the number of children who passed more than 60% of the questions was compiled. It was then determined if 70% of the children tested passed 60%

of the items.

Evaluation Objective 2:

To evaluate the extent to which the program, as actually carried out, coincided with the program as described in the project proposal.

Subjects

All participants in the program.

Methods and Procedures

In order to evaluate the quality and extent to which the program had been implemented, close monitoring of the program was carried out by conducting site visits at the beginning and end of the project period; by examining rosters containing lists of personnel working in the project, along with other documents related to the implementation of the program; and by maintaining continuous contact with the project coordinator in order to obtain data on all aspects of the functioning of the project.

Analysis of Data

A statement concernin; the extent of implementation of the program was made; and, where serious discrepancies existed between proposal and program, a description of those discrepancies would be provided.

CHAPTER III: FINDINGS

Evaluation Objective 1:

To determine whether, as a result of participation in the program 70% of the children will get 60% of the questions correct on an instrument measuring knowledges about various species.

The data relevant to the first evaluation objective is contained in Table 1.

Table 1

Percentage of Children Attaining Above 60% Correct on Test of Knowledge About Various Species

Grade	Percentage of Student's Above 60% Correct	Number of Student's Above 60% Correct	Number of Student's Taking Test
4	.99	279	280
3	.96	167	173
2	1.00	66	66
Total	.98	512	519

Reviewing the data in Table 1 it is apparent that the program objective regarding knowledge of various species was attained. Scanning the data in Table 1 it is interesting to note that the program objective was supported at each grade level tested.

Evaluation Objective 2:

To evaluate the extent to which the program, as actually carried out, coincided with the program as described in the project proposal.

On the basis of site visits, discussion with project personnel and review of project documents it was evident to the evaluator that the project was being implemented as described in the project proposal. Field observations indicated a smooth running organization which was providing a unique and valuable service to the target population. The children involved in the project were enthusiastic and a genuine interest in learning about various aspects of the interrelationships among various species was developed. A great deal of credit should be given to the project staff who were enthusiastic as well as imaginative in their presentation of material.

The field staff was supported by excellent coordination by the project director. The director was clearly in touch with both the educational and administrative aspects of the project. As previously noted the whole staff operated as a smooth and effective team.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the program was the integration of the field or site presentations with the overall educational process. A good deal of attention had been directed toward using the "zoo" presentation as an entry into other educationally relevant experiences.

CHAPTER IV: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ski.., Scale, Feather and Fur Program was designed to provide children with knowledge concerning the interrelationships among the various species. A review of the data indicates that this objective was attained. Site observations indicated that the program was implemented as described in the project proposal.

Recommendations:

1. The program should be recycled. This recommendation is based on the highly supportive findings.
2. Funds should be provided early enough so the program can begin in September rather than February. This would allow for a greater number of children to be exposed to this innovative program.